

Remarks:

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1-35 remain in the application. Claims 1, 3, 5-6, 8-12, 22-25, 27, 30, and 35 have been amended. Claims 33-34 have been withdrawn.

In the section entitled "Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112" on page 2 of the above-identified Office action, claim 12 has been rejected as being indefinite under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

More specifically, the Examiner has stated that there is no proper antecedent basis for "the group" in line 6 of claim 12. It is noted that this term is commonly used with well-accepted Markush-type limitations.

It is accordingly believed that the claims meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Should the Examiner find any further objectionable items, counsel would appreciate a telephone call during which the matter may be resolved.

In the section entitled "Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102" on pages 2-3 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 1-3, 5-6, 8-11, 21-28, 30-32, and 35 have been rejected as being

anticipated by Great Britain Patent No. 1,085,743 (hereinafter "GB '743") under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

The rejection has been noted and claims 1, 22-25, 27, 30, and 35 have been amended in an effort to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application. More specifically, the language of these claims has been amended to clearly recite that the ionic fan, not the other part of the fan unit, creates the air stream.

GB '743 discloses a sheet handling apparatus with one or more electrostatic sheet hold-down devices 15, 15', 15''. The electrostatic sheet hold-down devices are connected by a hose 26 to an air source providing air under pressure to the devices. Thus, the air stream exiting the device 15 is generated not by the device itself or even by the electrostatic field created by the device but by a pressurized air supply (see page 2, lines 75-81 and lines 124-126).

The device disclosed in GB '743 offers the possibility to switch-on and off either the electrostatic hold-down or the air hold-down, or both. In the case of light or heavy paper the air hold-down is switched on, but in the case of normal weight paper the air hold-down is switched off and the paper is only influenced by the electrostatic forces of the device.

In the latter case, no air is supplied from the device to the paper.

Clearly, GB '743 does not show "said at least one fan unit having at least one ionic fan for generating the air stream", as recited in claims 1, 22-25, 27, 30, and 35 of the instant application.

It is accordingly believed to be clear that none of the references, whether taken alone or in any combination, either show or suggest the features of claims 1, 22-25, 27, 30, and 35. Claims 1, 22-25, 27, 30, and 35 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over the art and since all of the dependent claims are ultimately dependent on claims 1, 25, 27, or 30, they are believed to be patentable as well.

In the section entitled "Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103" on pages 3-4 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 4, 7, 12, 29, and 32 have been rejected as being unpatentable over GB '743 in view of Weisperber (US Pat. No. 4,643,414) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a); claims 13-20 have been rejected as being unpatentable over GB '743 in view of Platsch (US Pat. No. 6,038,998) under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

As discussed above, claims 1, 27, and 30 are believed to be patentable over the art. Since claims 4, 7, 12-20, 29, and 32

are ultimately dependent on claims 1, 27, or 30, they are believed to be patentable as well.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-32 and 35 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made. Please charge any fees which might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner and Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,

For Applicants

YHC:cgm

LAURENCE A. GREENBERG
REG. NO. 29,308

September 10, 2003

Lerner and Greenberg, P.A.
Post Office Box 2480
Hollywood, FL 33022-2480
Tel: (954) 925-1100
Fax: (954) 925-1101